Anti-racism Audit Checklist For General Organizations

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Buy-in

- ❑ Board or governing body buy-in established through funding approval.
- ❑ Official statement of support for audit issued from governing body.

Funding

- ❑ Budget is set for the audit.
- ❑ Budget includes stipends and honoraria for representatives from the BIPOC[1] community.
- ❑ Budget includes appropriate funding for professional anti-racism participation and support, if possible.

Audit team

- ❑ Racially diverse team formed, majority BIPOC members if possible.
- ❑ Mix of internal and external participants established.
- ❑ Executive leadership participation designated.
- ❑ Team is no larger than 5-7 members.

Timeline

- ❑ Set a goal for completion within a two-month (8-week) time frame from start to finish.
- ❑ Establish three phrases – design, data collection, summary and report – within the 8-week period. Aim for 2.5 weeks per phase.
- ❑ Create specific deadlines for each phase.

[1] BIPOC is an acronym which stands for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. This is person-first language, which shifts away from terms like “marginalized” and “minority.” The phrase “People of Color” is a broad term, which includes those who are Black or African American, East Asian, Hispanic, Latinx/Latine, South Asian, and Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander.

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Respondents

- ❑ One-third each of staff, leadership, and constituents are identified.
- ❑ Majority BIPOC participants identified with stipends included (if possible).
- ❑ Policies are put in place to go to spaces where respondents are rather than asking them to come to the organization's building.

Interview questions

- ❑ Simple three-question model (adapt and develop as needed):
  - How is our organization acting or participating in racism?
  - How is our organization supporting efforts to dismantle racism?
  - What could our organization better support efforts to dismantle racism?

Internal assessment

- ❑ Team has reviewed the areas and answered queries about each area located on pages 3 & 4 of this document.

Governing body

- ❑ Report is made to the governing body.
- ❑ Actions steps identified.

Results

- ❑ Results of the anti-racism audit released to staff. They are given time to review the results, ask questions, receive answers, and consider next steps.
- ❑ Feedback from staff is considered when creating action steps. Action steps include clear dates and information on accountability.
- ❑ Results are released to partners and the public along with information on next steps.

Follow-up

- ❑ Timelines set for each action step. Some steps may start right away, while others may start later in order to build upon earlier steps/successes.
- ❑ Track the action steps, noting successes and concerns. Comment where timeline changes are needed and why.
- ❑ Establish check-in times with leadership, staff, partners, and the community. Use those times to demonstrate your accountability to becoming more anti-racist.

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Internal Assessment Areas and Queries

Mission, identity, and purpose

- Is racism or anti-racism integrated into the identity documents of the organization?
- Do those documents pass the "R-One" test (i.e. do the diversity and/or identity documents of the organization mention racism within the first page?)
- Has research been conducted into the racial history of your organization? If yes, how widely has it been publicized?

Structure

- What is the racial composition of the board or oversight body of the organization?
- Does that oversight body hold a common analysis of racism and anti-racism?
- Has that oversight body gone through anti-racism training?
- Does that oversight body have an actionable plan for initiating and carrying through a 1, 5, and 10-year plan to dismantle racism in your organization? If so, how effectively has it been implemented?
- Has the organization's oversight body put into place a plan for developing accountability to Communities of Color?
- Are the organization's structures prepared to resist Oppressive Power (OP), Identity Power (IDP), and White Power (WP)?

Constituency

- Does the organization have a racially specific understanding of the racial demographics of the organization's constituency?
- Are there efforts in place to support effective outreach to all members of the organization?
- If the constituency is all-White, are there measures in place to support racial diversity efforts in the local community?

Procedure

- Are there procedures in place that hold staff accountable for embodying anti-racism behaviors in the organization?
- Are there procedures in place for responding to and challenging expressions of racism as they appear at the organization at all levels of the racism iceberg, not just Oppressive Power? [2]
- Are there procedures in place to prioritize BIPOC vendors?

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[2] The Racism Iceberg can be found in the document, "A Road Map for Dismantling Institutional Racism in Nonprofits and Other Public Facing Institutions."

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Policy

- Has the organization put in place policies for regular reviews of action toward anti-racism plans?
- Has the organization established policies to develop criteria for assessing the results of actions, not just the intentions?
- Has the organization taken proactive steps to ensure that all spaces are fully welcoming to all?

Practice [3]

- What are the stated practices around key cultural elements and how do they support White norms and standards? For example, how does your organization establish norms around time, conflict, dress, and leadership style?
- What steps has your organization taken to improve and diversify your outreach and programming? Has the local community been asked to identify what it wants/needs?

Program

- How do the organization's programs support the local White community to join the organization in the work of dismantling racism?
- How do the organization's programs support the local BIPOC community to empower and support their efforts to dismantle racism?
- Have your organization's anti-racism commitments been made apparent, transparent, and consistent?
- Does your organization have relationships with local groups who are actively working to challenge racism?
- Has the executive leadership of your organization gone to the cultural, political, and meeting spaces of the local BIPOC community to listen and learn? Have funds been set aside funds to compensate BIPOC leaders for their consultation and advice?

Personnel

- Has your organization developed deliberate recruitment strategies to diversify your organization's staff?
- Has your organization fostered and built up local members of the BIPOC community to become potential staff members?

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[3] For more information on this area, read "White Supremacy Culture" by Tema Okun, which is based on the work of Daniel Buford from People's Institute for Survival and Beyond for more specifics. In brief, the characteristics covered include perfectionism, sense of urgency, defensiveness, quantity over quality, worship of the written word, only one right way, either/or thinking, power hoarding, fear of open conflict, individualism, progress is bigger, objectivity, and the right to comfort.

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